

THE POCAHONTAS TIMES

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CALVIN W. PRICE, EDITOR.

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(The Pelted Earl: Synopsis of previous chapters if any such chapters had been written of this historical work of fiction: Lord Dunmore, a poor but worthy Scot, having arrived at the port of New York carrying with him an appointment as governor of Virginia, finds he has disembarked at the wrong station. He is out of money but his credit being good he secures a boarding house for his party and makes his secretary a captain and sends him on to Virginia to raise the wind. Captain Foy succeeds in collecting a sum of money and returns to New York and the governor moves to Williamsburg, the capital of Virginia where he finds the most stylish and luxurious people in the world, waited upon by a host of happy slaves. Dunmore tries to act pretty in the good society into which he has been pitched forked as a lame duck, but he finds that he does not speak the same language with the exquisite Virginians. He finds, however that many Scots live in the mountains and the homesick earl welcomes them as they come to the capital city on business. The legislature assembled in May, 1774, and sends a high toned address to the earl and his countess, to which the scot replies in good english, but there is a thinly veiled hostility ever present.)

Dunmore sat in his rented house in Williamsburg that May evening. He was in his stockings, smoking his pipe, and he was filled with ire. Up in the mountains the Scotch settlers had broken across the border and settled on the Western Waters. The scouts had brought word that the Shawnees and Delawares and other Indians occupying the Ohio country were forming an alliance to clear the country of the palefaces and that a war cloud was gathering on the western frontier. The House of Burgesses refused to take the reports seriously.

A delegation then appeared at Dunmore's house. It was composed of three men from the mountains, Col. Andrew Lewis, county lieutenant from Botetorte county, Col. Charles Lewis, county lieutenant of Augusta county, and Col. William Preston, county lieutenant of Fincastle county. These three men had in charge in their three respective counties territory now embraced in eight of the richest states in the union.

Andrew Lewis was a tall, dark, saturnine man, smoking much and saying little. He was a born commander of men. Charles Lewis was a tall, frank man, popular and much esteemed. He lived in the open and for twenty years had watched the border, living under the open sky. William Preston was a fair haired, ruddy faced fat man, of clerical habits, and the spokesman of the delegation.

"Governor, the Indians are preparing to wage a war of extermination on the white settlers in the mountains. We know that there is a change in the policy of the Indian nations. For twenty years they have sent small war parties into our settlements and thousands have been destroyed by them. Now, Cornwallis, who has headed some of the most important raids, is forming a confederacy among the Indian tribes to get together a force that will sweep the country clean as far as the Blue Ridge, and once there, they may swarm to the seaboard. In the mean time, Indian atrocities are being committed daily. Will the colony send an army against them?"

"It will not," replied the Governor.

"What ought to be done," continued Preston. "Is to send an army across the Ohio river and strike them before they can strike us. By a bold stroke, we could destroy the Indian towns, and their supplies, and either conquer them in battle or force them to agree to a treaty that will protect our counties."

"Would the settlers agree to move back to the country east of the Allegheny?" inquired the Governor.

"They will not. There are too many of them. Why, sir, there are over four thousand white persons in the Greenbrier Valley alone, and they already are demanding a county wholly on the Western Waters. That has been tried and the only effect that it had was to speed the tide of the western movement."

"Gentlemen," said the Governor, "I have been thinking about this predicament that I am in and I have determined to do something about it. Outside of the mountaineers, I do not have many friends in Virginia. Everything I do seems to rub them the wrong way. But there is one man here that has got sense like a horse, and I believe him to be my friend, and that he is true as steel, and he knows all the ins and outs of this Virginia aristocracy that is smothering me. It is Sir John Randolph, and he is out in the back yard now playing with the children. We will call him in and go into a session and see if we can do anything."

"Randolph," Dunmore said, when that gentleman had joined them, "we are at the parting of the ways. You believe with me that there is about to be war with the Indians on the frontier and you have agreed with me that the settlement on the Western Waters are so firmly fixed that there is no chance to move them back. How are we to raise an army to strike them before they can cross the Ohio?"

"Governor," was Randolph's reply, "get rid of the legislature."

"But how can I? They treat me with contempt. You know that I laid before them in the most solemn way and with full proof, the danger that threatens from the west. And you know how they received it. They talked it all around the board, about the unlawful invasion of Indian lands by Virginians. That if the Virginians had stayed on the eastern slopes that there would have

been no atrocities committed. That the Virginians who lived on the Western Waters were transgressors, and in many instances they were outlaws and fugitives from justice. They recalled too that in the expedition against the Indians in force, nineteen years ago, that the Indians had annihilated Braddock's army, and that in the rage engendered by that expedition that the Indians had raided clear to the Blue Ridge and that in less than a year that over three thousand white persons had been killed and scalped. That the situation this year is similar to that of 1755, and that such an army as I asked for would be destroyed and that all the western part of Virginia would be sacrificed to the rage of the savages. They claimed that we were the aggressors and that the war cloud was one of our own making. And others refused to believe that there was any danger of war, and after they had nudged the water by a long debate, they sent the papers back to me, telling me in effect, that in case of any disturbance the sheriff would read the riot act in the county in which it occurred."

Then Preston said: "Mountain people cannot live anywhere else. The mountains are in their blood. We are going to hold those mountains some way or some how."

"And you know," the Governor continued, "when I sent the papers back to them with another message, they refused to consider, or discuss it, and bundled the whole thing back to me, with a strong intimation that if they came back to them again they would throw them in the waste paper basket. Now what am I to do?"

"Get rid of the legislature."

"Why?"

"If the legislature was not in session, you as governor would have the excuse for any warlike action on your part as an emergency measure. There have been many sins committed in the name of emergency. If you attempt to do anything of the kind with the assembly here, they will thwart your purpose, and besides they will talk for days and nights and dull the fine enthusiasm that exists in the mountains to fight the Indians. You would cause a division in the colony that would find us fighting among ourselves, and they might put our people all to the tide-water country. You could not get arms or ammunition. Send them home."

"But how?"

"Order the assembly dissolved."

"I'll do it! Draw me up an order."

"Hold on, my lord," said Randolph. "Watch your step. It is not as easy as that by any means. Remember that there are more than one way to kill a cat. Take counsel with yourself. The assembly has been here but a few days. It has not done anything except to authorize a ferry or two, and pass on a few petitions about roads. The only debate that they have had on any measure is your message in regard to fighting war on the savages, in behalf of our mountain people. That was given due consideration and voted upon and the vote carefully tallied. You were out voted on the question of the wisdom of a governmental policy, and on an issue defined and so nearly balanced that wise men and patriots cannot be criticised for a division of opinion. To dissolve this assembly for an honest vote, would bring about worse troubles than you now have and would defeat your purpose. I am with you in the belief that the time has come when we must strike and strike hard for territory, or Virginia, will be confined to a flat, sandy square of tobacco land. Already Pennsylvania and other colonies are appropriating Virginia land in the north-west."

Then followed a general discussion, and the longer they talked the more determined the governor grew in his desire to send the burgesses home.

Finally Randolph out lined the plan and pledging them to secrecy, the party broke up. Randolph took his solitary way to the Raleigh Tavern, the headquarters hotel for Virginian statesmen, where he had a room. His colored boy was in attendance upon him, and when they reached the room, Randolph said to him: "Saul, scout around and if you see Mr. Skylark, give him my compliments, and ask him how he would like a game of chess, and bring him up?"

It was not long, and Mr. Skylark was announced. A session of chess was contemplated, but before the play began, Skylark, whose tongue was hung on a pivot, must needs give voice to the latest scandal in governmental circumstances, and that was the arbitrary closing of the port of Boston, as a punishment for a riot in the harbor, when a shipper had lost a cargo of tea, by indignant citizens, who objected to being farmed out by statesmen in London. Boston had had a bright idea to send a man horseback all the weary miles between the capital of Massachusetts and the capital of Virginia, to carry the news of the outrage.

When the importance of the event had been brought home to Virginia by an actual appearance of a special messenger on the floor of the house of burgesses, there was no end to the excitement. Virginia was torn between its loyalty to the King, and its anger at Parliament, and Virginia, loyal and true, glorifying in the remembrance that it had settled the king's hash by Bacon's Rebellion, near a hundred years ago, sought for some fitting expression of its sentiments, that would confound Parliament, and gratify Boston, and reaffirm Virginia's love for the King.

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"Will we do it now, or after a game of chess?"

"Chess? What's a game of chess, with the port of Boston closed, and Hampton Roads in danger?"

"Well," said Randolph, "you do the writing, for I do not propose to be known in this affair at all. Skylark, I can make a suggestion that you might want to daddy. It is one that I cannot be known in at all. I would like to see this port of Boston stuff die down, however, for we will not be able to get a bill considered till all the oratory that it has raised comes to an end. Now here is something that might hit the crazy bone, especially if it is introduced by you. Introduce a resolution, setting aside the day in the near future as a day of fasting and prayer, and on that day, the assembly can repair to a church and listen to a sermon on the subject, and that will give you all a chance to do something to justify that lad's long ride from Boston; you can praise the King; and swear loyalty to him; and give parliament particular fits, and that comes as near steering safely through a rock infested channel, as anything that comes to my mind. I have been thinking of this tempest in a teapot, and I have come to the conclusion, that such a play is indicated by the position of the pieces."

"But," said Skylark, "what will Dunmore do about it?"

"Just about burst a blood vessel, I suppose."

"Then, by the Lord Marry, I am for it."

And they then started something that can never be stopped. Randolph suffering from suppressed laughter as he armed the solemn Skylark with his dynamite, could not foresee the end of the train of events that set in motion in that lighthearted manner. He was to live to see himself a voluntary exile from America, never to return to his native state, and to find a resting place in England, and Virginia, the brightest star in the galaxy of states, free and independent.

And so the resolution passed, and Dunmore was provided with the excuse that he needed to send the members of the house of burgesses to their homes. Declaring that the resolution setting apart the day of fasting and prayer for the sorrows of Boston to savor of treason, he summarily dissolved the assembly, and they were parted like a swarm of bees made angry and all the more dangerous.

Dunmore then wrote to his county lieutenants to form armies to invade the Ohio country and strike a blow at the Indian nations before they could invade Virginia. That he exceeded his authority in making the order. That they must know that if they succeeded that popular sentiment would be so strong for them, that the assembly would necessarily be compelled to reward them. He would promise the troops powder. That he would march with them.

And so the word was sent far and wide, from Staunton to Crab Orchard south, and from Staunton to Winchester, north, to organize by counties, and everywhere the word came back, that as soon as the crop of corn was safe, the riflemen would assemble.

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While the mountaineers were forming the two armies, one to march on the northern route by way of the forks of the Ohio, and the other to cut across the country to the mouth of the Great Kanawha River, and form a line of forts from that place to Pittsburgh, the fasters and the prayers were playing the hand that had fallen to them, by Dunmore's dissolution order. Not being able to assemble at the capital as members of the legislature, they set in motion a movement for a convention, and after a couple of months, on the 1st day of August, 1774, there was a convention in Williamsburg, and delegates were elected to meet with representatives from other colonies at Philadelphia to form a continental congress, and so step by step as though inspired by heaven, the American colonies progressed in the greatest nation that the world has ever seen.

Dunmore marched his armies to the Ohio country. They won the war and secured a treaty with the Indians. That army drew up the first declaration of independence on the banks of the Ohio River, November 5, 1774, declaring the right to protect themselves, though it is not clear whether it was directed to the world at large, or tidewater Virginia, in particular.

(The succeeding chapters which will never be written might show our hero Dunmore caught between the upper and nether millstones, and peiled out of Virginia. None so poor to do him reverence. The county that had been named for him was changed to Shenandoah, and his fort to Fort Pitt. His name perished from all and sundry with the exception that my ancestor, Jacob Warwick, one of the soldiers under Dunmore, named his plantation on Sitlington Creek, Dunmore, and that name is the name of the town there this day.)

NOTICE

We are closing out our accounts. All parties having accounts with the undersigned who have not already made settlement will please do so on or before December 15, 1925. We thank you for your trade, but must have our money.

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21st day of December, 1925, at one o'clock p. m. proceed to sell at public auction to the highest bidder the following real estate and personal property:

First: That certain lot situated in the Town of Marlinton, Pocahontas County, West Virginia, known as lot No. 16 in Block 33 of said Town and being the same lot conveyed to John D. Gay and Levia J. Carter by J. C. Johnson and others, by deed dated the 25th day of April, 1914, and of record in the same office in deed book 50 at page 414.

This lot has upon it a large warehouse and is situated in the business section of Marlinton.

Second: Twenty head of black cows and calves, which are now on the property of the said Levia J. Carter, known as the George Gibson and Beverly Waugh places, near Marlinton.

The above mentioned real estate will be sold at the front door of the Courthouse of Pocahontas County, and the above described personal property will be sold on the George Gibson place above Marlinton.

Terms of Sale:—Cash in hand on day of sale.

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A. P. EDGAR Trustee.

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ANDREW PRICE
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H. G. McNEEL,
Attorney-at-Law,
Marlinton, W. Va.
Will practice in the courts of Pocahontas and adjoining counties, and in the Court of Appeals of the state of West Virginia.

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